
By: **Delegate Heller**
Introduced and read first time: February 18, 2003
Assigned to: Rules and Executive Nominations

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Task Force to Study the Availability of Audiology and Speech-Language**
3 **Services**

4 FOR the purpose of establishing the Task Force to Study the Availability of Audiology
5 and Speech-Language Services; specifying the composition, powers, and duties
6 of the Task Force; providing for the staffing of the Task Force; requiring the
7 Task Force to report its findings and recommendations to certain committees of
8 the General Assembly by a certain date; providing for the termination of this
9 Act; and generally relating to the Task Force to Study the Availability of
10 Audiology and Speech-Language Services.

11 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
12 MARYLAND, That:

13 (a) There is a Task Force to Study the Availability of Audiology and Speech-
14 Language Services for children in kindergarten through grade 12 in the public schools
15 in the State.

16 (b) The Task Force consists of the following 13 members:

17 (1) Two members of the Senate of Maryland, appointed by the President
18 of the Senate;

19 (2) Two members of the House of Delegates, appointed by the Speaker of
20 the House;

21 (3) The State Superintendent of Schools, or the State Superintendent's
22 designee; and

23 (4) The following members, appointed by the Governor:

24 (i) A representative from the Maryland Association of Boards of
25 Education;

26 (ii) Two public school personnel who are employed by a local public
27 school system and who supervise hearing and speech-language services within a local
28 public school system;

1 (iii) Two consumer members;

2 (iv) Two individuals who are practicing members of the Maryland
3 Speech-Language and Hearing Association; and

4 (v) A chairman.

5 (c) The Department of Legislative Services shall provide staff for the Task
6 Force.

7 (d) The Task Force shall study and consider:

8 (1) The scope of services provided by audiologists and speech-language
9 pathologists in the public schools in the State;

10 (2) The availability of licensed audiologists and licensed certified
11 speech-language pathologists employed by and on staff in each of the local public
12 school systems in the State;

13 (3) The amount and cost of contracted services utilized by each of the
14 local public school systems in the State for audiology and speech-language services;

15 (4) The number of vacancies filled by contracted personnel and the total
16 number of vacancies for audiologists and speech-language pathologists in the local
17 public school systems in the State;

18 (5) The caseloads and workload duties for the audiologists and
19 speech-language pathologists in the local public school systems in the State;

20 (6) The number of children without hearing and speech-language
21 services due to unfilled positions for audiologists and speech-language pathologists,
22 including the average length of time the children have been without services;

23 (7) The cost of compensatory services and any other legal or
24 administrative costs incurred by the local public school systems in the State for
25 children who do not receive hearing and speech-language services; and

26 (8) The number of children in need of hearing and speech-language
27 services in the local public school systems in the State.

28 (e) The Task Force shall make recommendations regarding:

29 (1) The need, if any, for audiologists and speech-language pathologists
30 on staff in the local public school systems in the State;

31 (2) The need, if any, to implement methods to retain and recruit
32 audiologists and speech-language pathologists in the public school systems in the
33 State; and

1 (3) Whether the current caseloads and workloads for audiologists and
2 speech-language pathologists need to be adjusted to increase hearing and
3 speech-language services for children in need.

4 (f) On or before December 31, 2003, the Task Force shall issue a written
5 report of its findings and recommendations to the Senate Education, Health, and
6 Environmental Affairs Committee and the House Ways and Means Committee.

7 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
8 July 1, 2003. It shall remain effective for a period of 1 year and, at the end of June 30,
9 2004, with no further action required by the General Assembly, this Act shall be
10 abrogated and of no further force and effect.